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DRAFT SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN/ ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

OCTOBER 1988

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SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK / ALASKA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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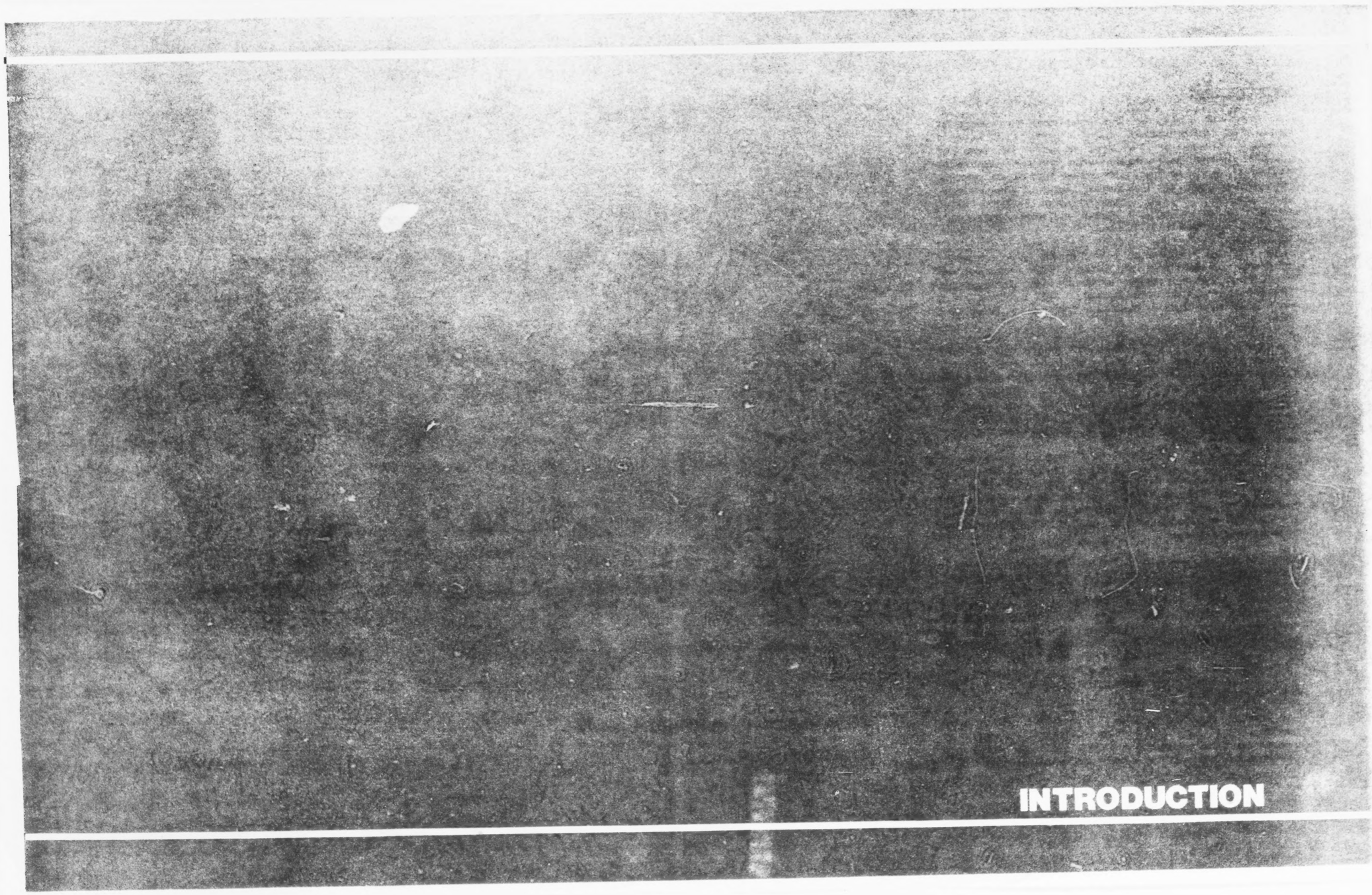

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The town of Sitka, in the southeast panhandle of Alaska, is approximately 100 air miles southwest of Juneau. Access to the area is only by boat or aircraft. Sitka is a regular stop on the state ferry system as well as for commercial flights connecting from cities such as Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau, and Seattle. Public transportation within Sitka consists of taxis only. There are also rental cars and state-licensed tour buses.

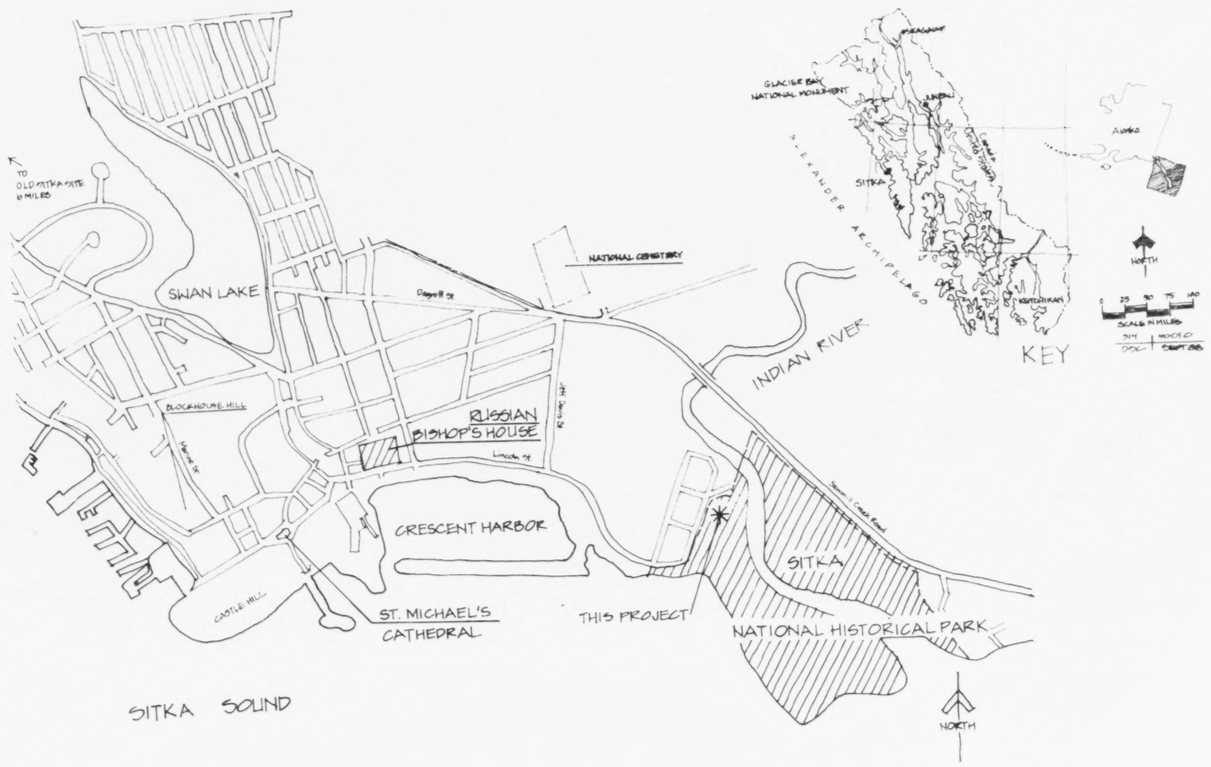
Sitka National Historical Park forms the southeast boundary of the town of Sitka. The Indian River flows from the mountains north of town through the 108-acre park into Sitka Sound. The park is on a small peninsula that is between the Indian River and Sitka Sound.

The visitor center area, where the majority of visitors receive information and view exhibits and cultural demonstrations, is the focal point for visitors to Sitka National Historical Park. All administrative, maintenance, and curatorial activities also occur in this same area. The number of park visitors and staff has increased since the visitor center was constructed in 1965.

The legislated purpose of Sitka National Historical Park is to preserve and interpret the historically and culturally significant sites and artifacts relating to the 1804 battle of Sitka, the Russian Bishop's House, the Russian-American period, and the Tlingit peoples of southeast Alaska.

Much of the land now in Sitka National Historical Park was originally dedicated as a public park by President Harrison on June 21, 1890. Twenty years later, on March 23, 1910, President Taft signed a proclamation designating the public park as Sitka National Monument. In 1952 President Truman issued a proclamation to correct errors in the legal description of the area and to add tracts of land to the monument. In 1972, Public Law 92-501 expanded the park and changed the monument's designation to Sitka National Historical Park.

The Master Plan for Sitka National Monument was completed in 1966. The most current interpretive prospectus was approved in 1981, and the Statement for Management was completed and approved in 1983.



SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

LOCATION MAP ALASKA

PURPOSE OF THIS SITE PLAN

The purpose of this site development plan/environmental assessment is to provide the park with a range of conceptual alternatives that show functional site and interior building space relationships of the visitor center, a maintenance facility, and the surrounding site and to examine the consequences of such alternatives on park resources. These alternatives provide a range of solutions to the problems associated with current use and help implement the following park management objectives:

Obtain adequate facilities for storage, protection, and preservation of totem poles and the physical remnants of the culture and history of the Tlingit and Russian residents of the area.

Promote an understanding and appreciation of the contributions made to the culture and history of the Tlingit and Russian residents of the area.

Provide for the public a program of cultural awareness and general information about the southeast Alaskan Indian culture.

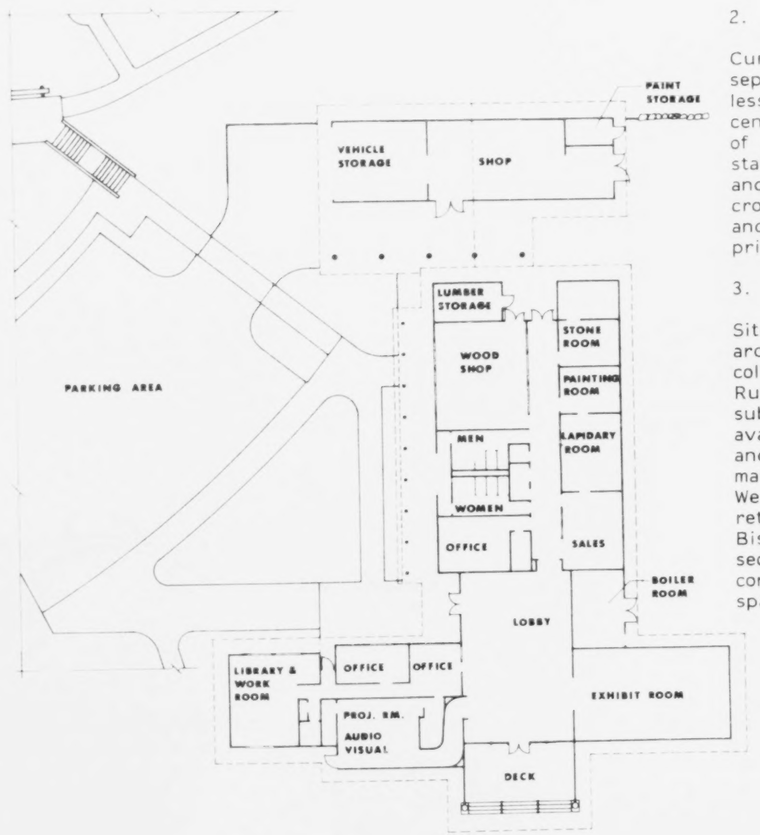
PLANNING ISSUES / EXISTING CONDITIONS

Several issues have arisen as the park has developed and visitation has increased. This section describes the issues that this study will address.

1. Visitor Center Capacity

When the visitor center was constructed in 1965, it was designed to house administrative offices and to accommodate approximately 25,000 visitors annually. Visitation for 1988 is already over 100,000, which far exceeds the design capacity of the building. Visitors arrive in "waves" by bus from the cruise ships and overwhelm the facilities. Eight to 10 tour buses containing up to 450 visitors sometimes arrive at the visitor center simultaneously, resulting in congestion

EXISTING VISITOR CENTER FLOOR PLAN



because the center was not built to accommodate this large a crowd. The audiovisual room holds 45 visitors, and sometimes visitors do not have enough time to view the interpretive message. The restrooms also become quite crowded during peak visitation, often adding to the time constraints.

2. Administrative Facilities

Currently the park administrative offices are in two separate wings of the visitor center, contributing to a less-than-optimal operating situation. The visitor center was originally designed to accommodate a staff of four permanent and three seasonal employees. The staff has grown to eight permanent and nine seasonals and is expected to increase. Operating conditions are crowded, with staff sharing inadequate work space and storage area. There is no conference room or private office space for law enforcement activities.

3. Curatorial Facility/Artifact Storage

Sitka National Historical Park has extensive archeological, ethnographic, and historic objects in its collections. These collections, all related to Sitka, Russian America, and the Tlingit culture, have grown substantially in the past five years, outgrowing any available secure and environmentally sound storage and curation space. The Russian-American era materials that have been stored in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, for 10 years are scheduled to be returned in 1988. Some of the objects will be Russian Bishop's Home refurnishings; many others will require secure, environmentally stable storage. This will contribute to the existing lack of inadequate storage space.

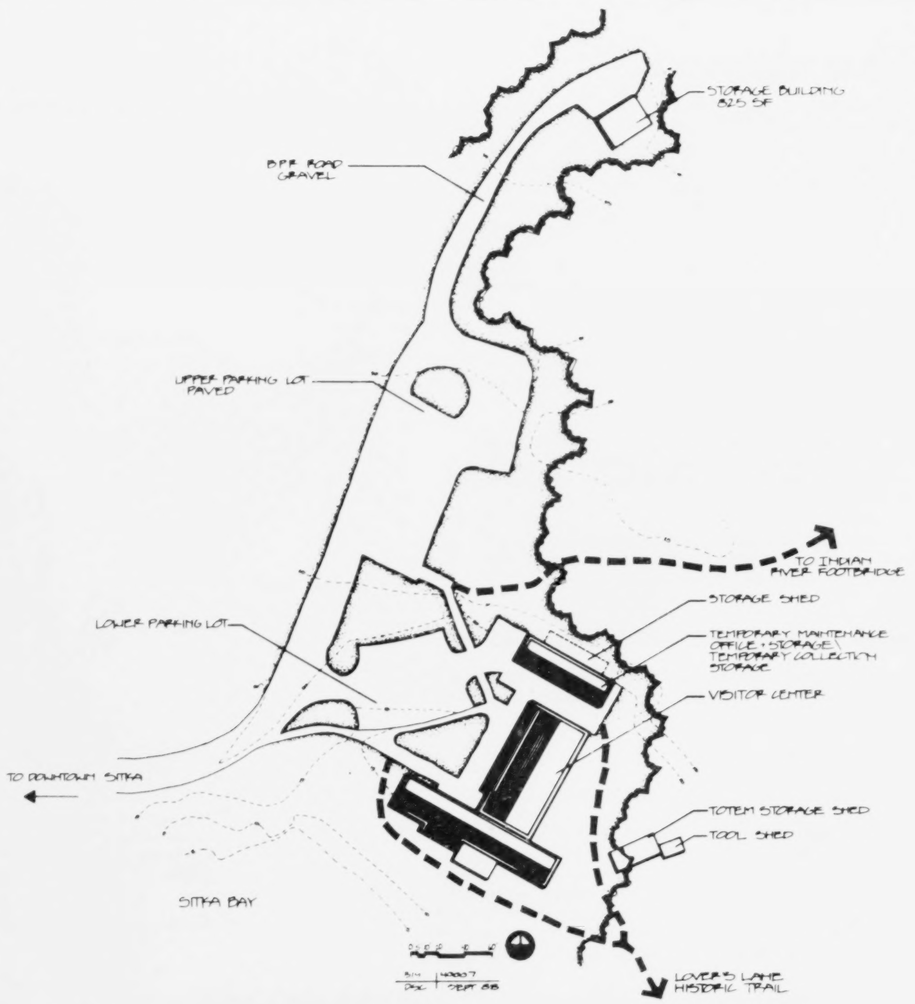
Currently, Park Service and Alaska State Museum collections of Russian-American era materials are housed in a facility on the north side of the visitor center. There is no fire suppression system or environmental control system in the facility, and artifacts are subject to decay. This facility also houses the maintenance staff, and there is inadequate working and storage space for both activities. The two functions of collection management and maintenance, even under the best conditions, are not compatible because of the nature of the materials used in maintenance activities--acetylene torches, flammable materials, solvents--which should not be stored in proximity to valuable collections. In addition, the park has in its care original Tlingit totems. These are currently stored behind the temporary maintenance/curatorial facility and in the totem storage shed under poor climatic conditions and are also subject to decay.

4. Maintenance Area

All maintenance functions used to occur in the facility on the north side of the visitor center (described above). Because of the incompatibility of maintenance and curatorial/artifact storage functions, all maintenance activities except nonflammable storage and offices for maintenance staff have been removed. There currently is no adequate permanent space for maintenance activities for the park staff to use. Currently there is a temporary storage shed north of the visitor center. This structure is not secure or adequate for maintenance needs.

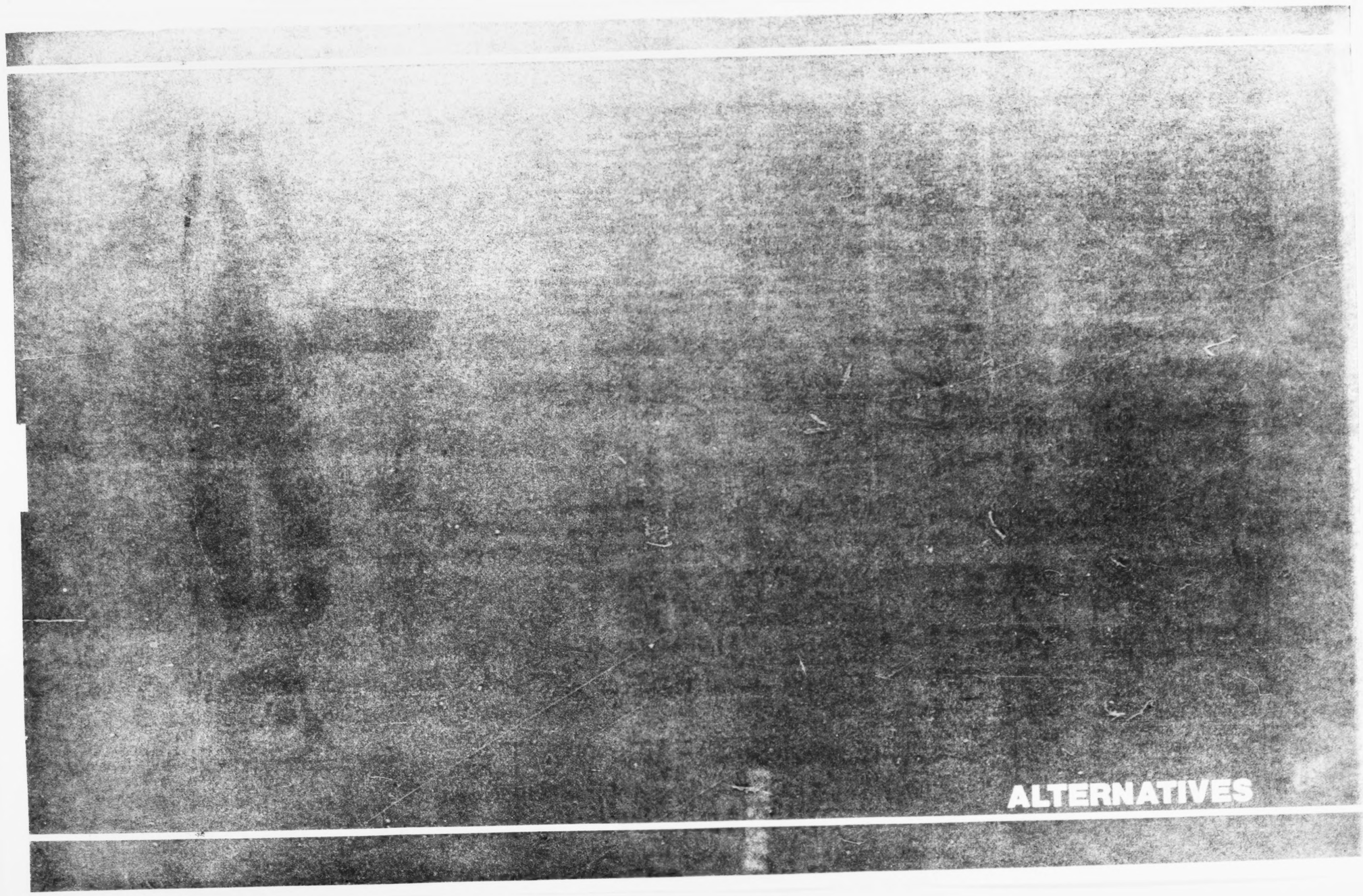
5. Parking/Circulation

Visitors arrive at the visitor center area either by foot, tour bus, taxi, or private vehicle. Visitors arriving in private vehicles park in the existing paved parking lot in front of the visitor center. The majority of visitors arrive by tour bus and are dropped off in the upper parking lot. This upper lot, which provides parking for buses and cars, is poorly organized, and there is much unused space. From this upper lot, visitors then descend stairs, walk through the paved lot at the front of the visitor center, and enter the building. The building entrance is not clearly identified, resulting in visitors entering from several different points.



SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

EXISTING SITE PLAN **ALASKA**


ALTERNATIVES

Four action alternatives have been developed that address the issues identified above. A no-action alternative, i.e., a continuation of existing conditions, is also presented. Alternative 1, the Park Service's preferred alternative, is described first. General concepts were outlined for all action alternatives to ensure that they address the needs of the park. In addition to the general concepts, several assumptions were made to help guide and order the alternatives. The general concepts and assumptions are presented below.

GENERAL CONCEPTS

Provide secure and environmentally controlled curatorial facilities.

Improve visitor circulation within the visitor center to reduce congestion and conflicts.

Provide adequate maintenance facilities, which are separate from the visitor/curatorial area.

Provide adequate administrative space, on- or off-site, that is separate from visitor use areas.

Maintain existing exhibit areas.

Provide office space for the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center staff.

ASSUMPTIONS

Common to all of the action alternatives are the following assumptions:

The existing two-story maintenance/curatorial facility will be converted into an environmentally controlled curatorial services area. The current breezeway between the maintenance/curatorial facility and the visitor center would become a two-story totem display area. As a part of the design of the facility, there will be visual access from the totem display area into the curatorial work area for possible interpretation of the curatorial activities.

The auditorium in the southwest wing of the visitor center will be expanded to incorporate the existing office space. The expanded auditorium will have an estimated capacity of 100 people. If it is not economically or structurally feasible to expand the auditorium to the full size of the southwest wing of the visitor center, the auditorium will be expanded as much as possible, with the remaining space used for additional exhibits or storage.

The cultural center exhibit and demonstration area will retain its current size. Some expansion might occur to provide office space for cultural center staff.

The existing exhibit area will remain in its current location.

A new maintenance building, approximately 3,000 square feet, will be built or leased in a location that is separate from the curatorial and visitor areas.

Administrative offices that will occupy a space of approximately 2,500-3,000 square feet will be built or leased.

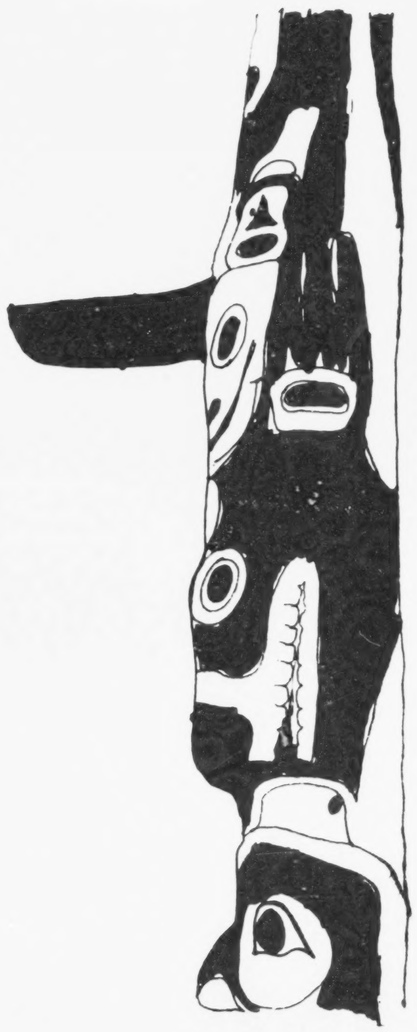
The upper parking lot will be redesigned to improve circulation.

All new construction and remodeling would comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and all other applicable codes.

The bus company will be asked to stagger the arrival of the buses so that use will be a little more evenly distributed.

The maintenance shed and totem storage and tool sheds will be removed.

The visitor entrance will be clearly identified by signs.



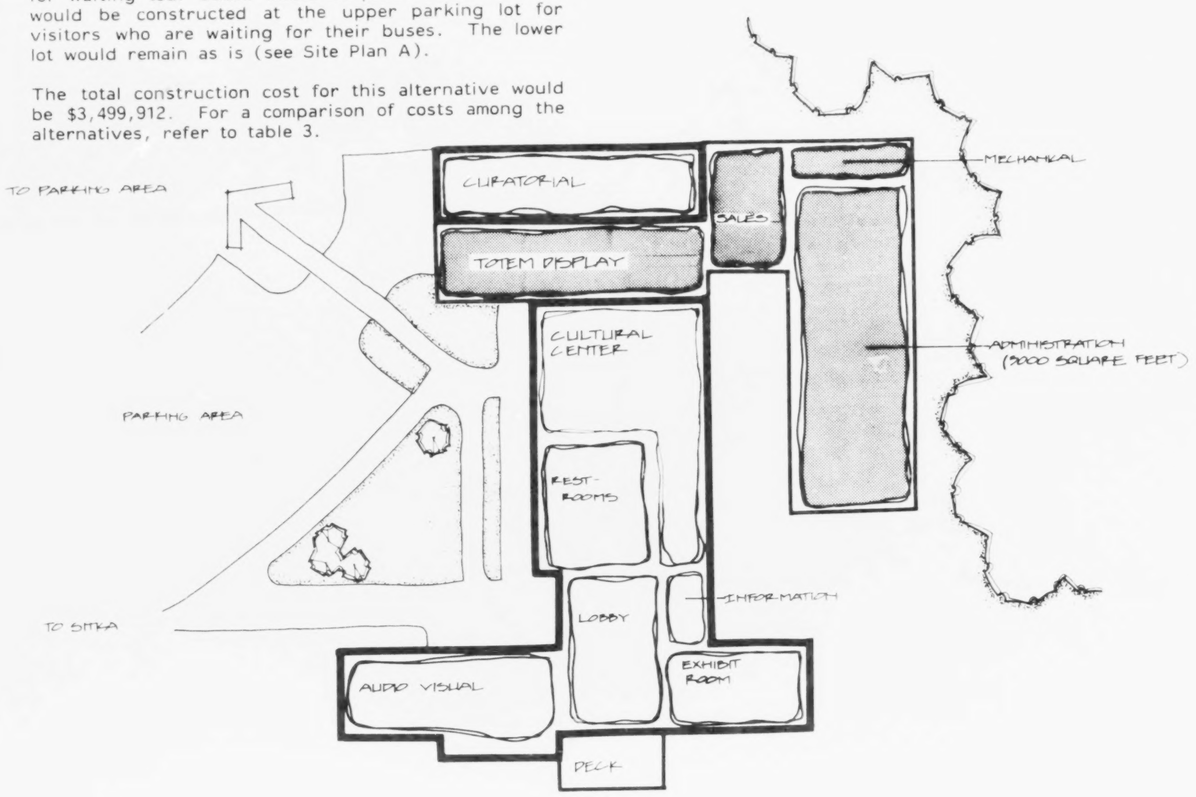
ALTERNATIVE 1–PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

This alternative proposes the construction of a new wing behind the existing visitor center to include space for administrative functions. This new wing would contain a conference room, office space for eight permanent employees, a law enforcement office, office space for four seasonal interpreters, a library, a darkroom, archive storage, storage, and a restroom. New sales and mechanical (heating) areas would also be in the new wing (see Alternative 1 map). Architecturally, the new wing would reflect the existing building style, with similar exterior finishes and overall roof heights. An open "courtyard" area would be formed between the two areas. This area could be used for interpretation, cultural center staff, or park staff purposes. The existing cultural center area would be expanded into the existing sales area to provide staff office space. The existing restrooms would be expanded and made handicap-accessible. The existing temporary maintenance/curatorial facility would be redesigned into an environmentally controlled curatorial services area, and the area between this facility and the visitor center would be converted into a totem display area. The information desk would be relocated to the existing mechanical room so that visitors entering the building would have direct visual contact with the information desk and crowding near the door would be reduced. Visitors would enter through the lobby, circulate through the audiovisual/exhibit rooms and into the cultural center area, and exit through the totem display area. For exact square footages of areas within the buildings, refer to table 2.

A new 3,000-square-foot maintenance building would be constructed on park land at the top of the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) road north of the visitor center (see Site Plan A). Access to this facility would be via the existing gravel road, with the permission of the Sheldon Jackson Museum. This facility would contain a carpentry shop, lumber storage, secure storage, paint/flammable storage, general storage, office space, a welding area, a restroom, and parking for three vehicles. Architecturally, the building would be designed to fit into the forested environment with minimal intrusion.

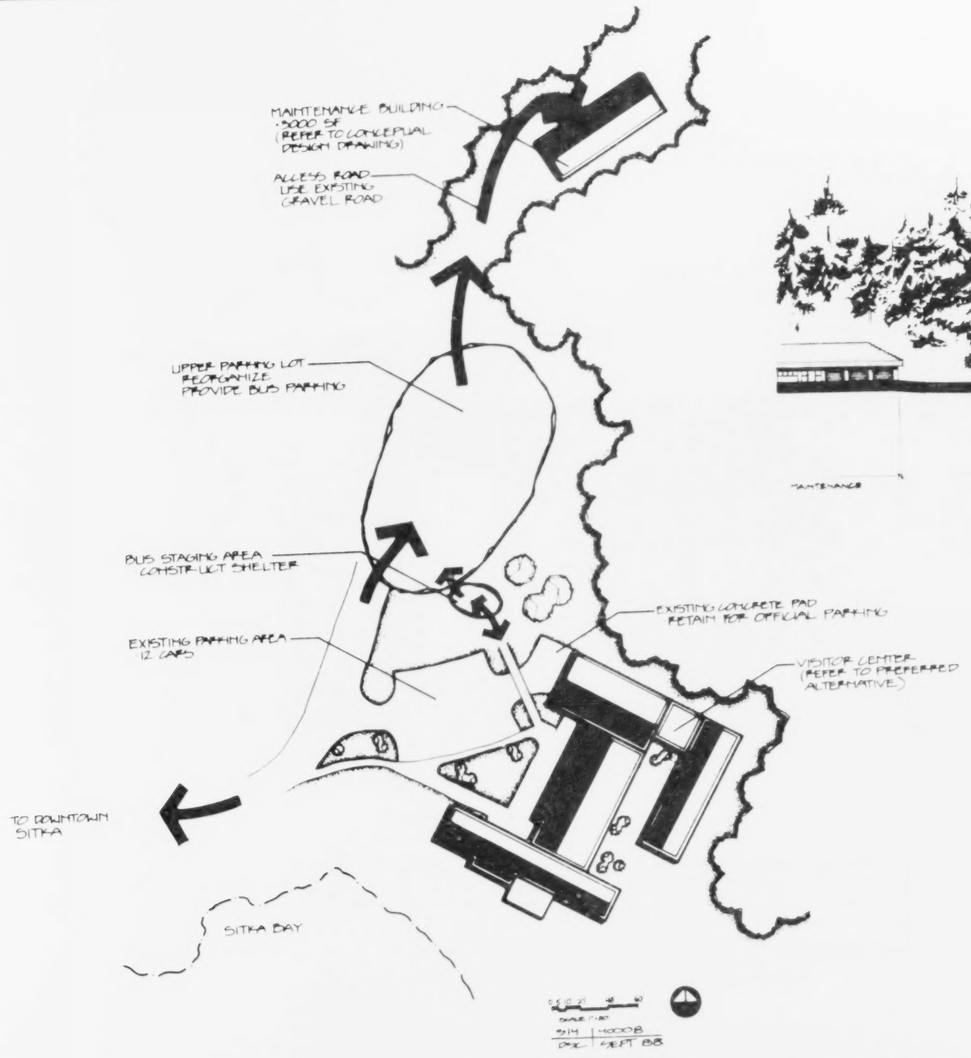
This alternative also proposes the expansion of the audiovisual room and redesign of the upper parking lot to more efficiently use the space. Parking spaces for waiting tour buses would be provided. A shelter would be constructed at the upper parking lot for visitors who are waiting for their buses. The lower lot would remain as is (see Site Plan A).

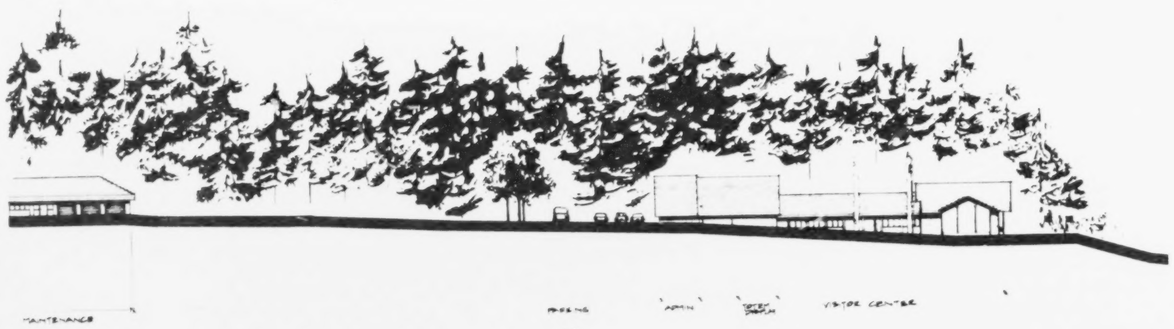
The total construction cost for this alternative would be $3,499,912. For a comparison of costs among the alternatives, refer to table 3.



SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

ALTERNATIVE 1 (PREFERRED ALT.) ALASKA





ELEVATION A

SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

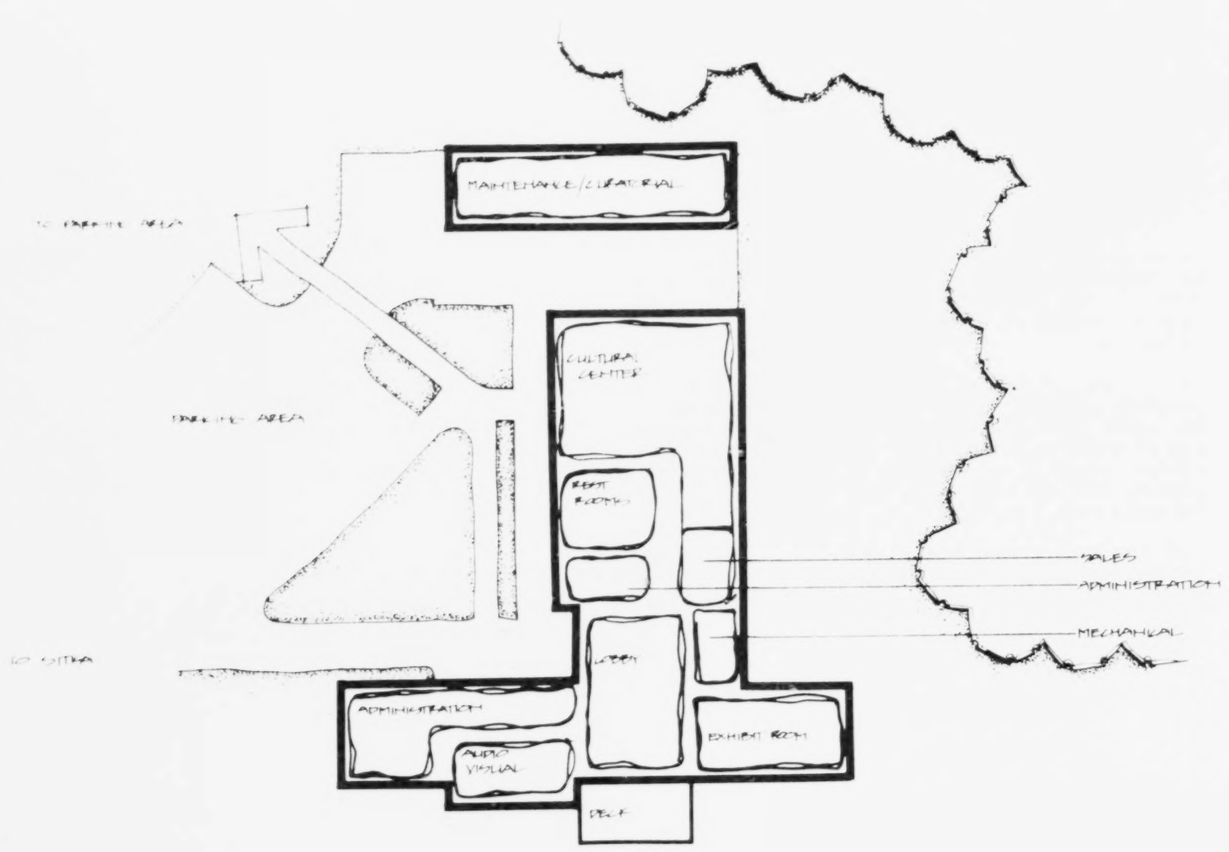
SITE PLAN A ALASKA

ALTERNATIVE 2–NO ACTION

The no-action alternative would leave the visitor center area as it currently exists with visitor activities, interpretive exhibits, and administrative offices in the same area. The maintenance building would continue to house curatorial and limited maintenance staff office space. Tour bus parking and drop-off would continue as is in the upper parking lot, with continued automobile parking in front of the visitor center.

None of the aforementioned issues would be resolved with implementation of the no-action alternative.

There would be no additional costs for this alternative.



SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
ALTERNATIVE 2 (No Action) ALASKA

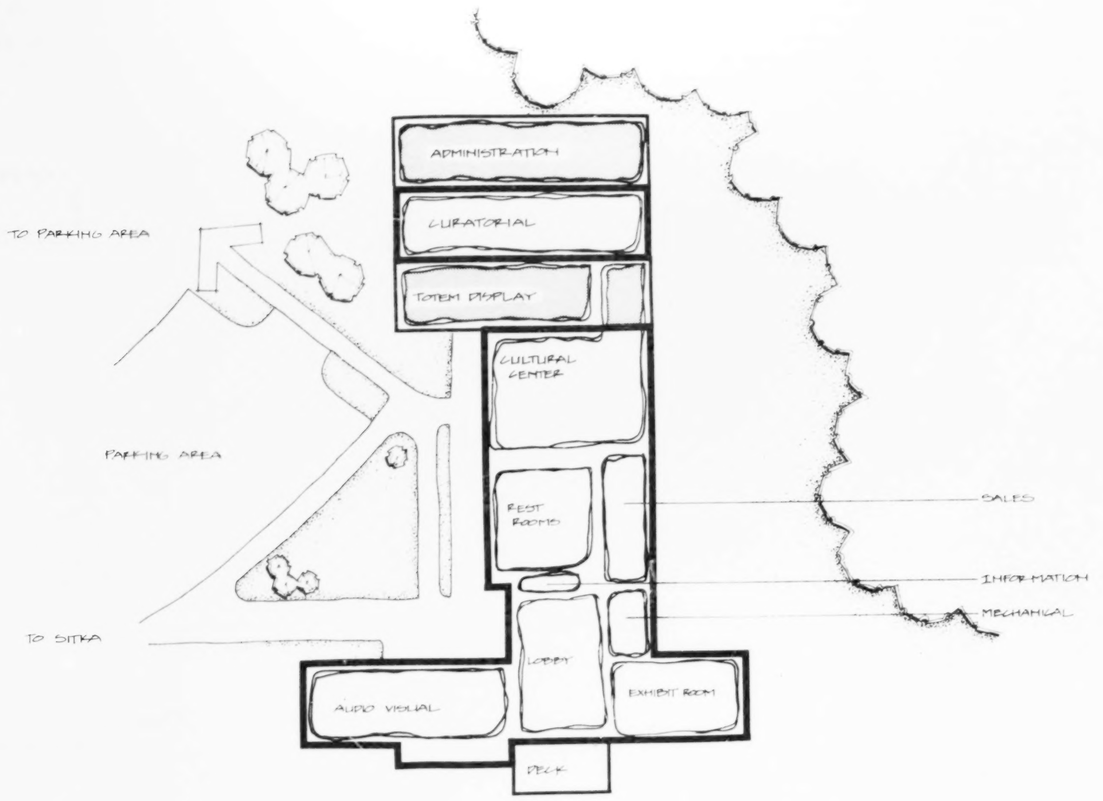
ALTERNATIVE 3

This alternative proposes the construction of a new two-story administrative wing. In addition, the existing temporary maintenance/curatorial facility would be converted into an environmentally controlled curatorial services facility. Adjacent to the redesigned curatorial services area would be a new two-story totem display area, which would also house office space for cultural center staff (see Alternative 3 map). New handicap-accessible restrooms would also be constructed on the first floor of the redesigned curatorial area. Visitors would enter through the lobby and flow through the building, exiting through the new totem display area.

As in alternative 1, a new maintenance building would be constructed at the end of the BPR road, with access by way of the existing gravel road. For exact square footages of areas within the buildings, refer to table 2.

As in the preferred alternative, this alternative proposes expansion of the auditorium and redesign of the upper parking lot for more efficient use. Parking spaces would be provided for waiting tour buses. A shelter would be constructed at the upper lot for visitors who are waiting for their buses. The lower lot would remain as is (see Site Plan A).

The total construction cost for this alternative would be $3,499,912. For a comparison of costs among the alternatives refer to table 3 under cost estimates.



SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

ALTERNATIVE 3 **ALASKA**

ALTERNATIVE 4A

This alternative proposes to relocate administrative and maintenance functions off site in leased space. The visitor center would contain visitor functions and exhibits and cultural center activities. The present maintenance/curatorial facility would be redesigned for curatorial services. As in alternative 1, the audiovisual area would be expanded, the cultural center area would be enlarged to provide office space for that activity, the restroom area would be expanded and made handicap-accessible, and the breezeway between the visitor center and the redesigned curatorial services building would house a new totem display area. Visitors would enter and exit as described in alternative 1. New mechanical (heating) and sales areas would be constructed east of the curatorial services/totem display area (see Alternatives 4A and 4B map and table 2 for specific square footages).

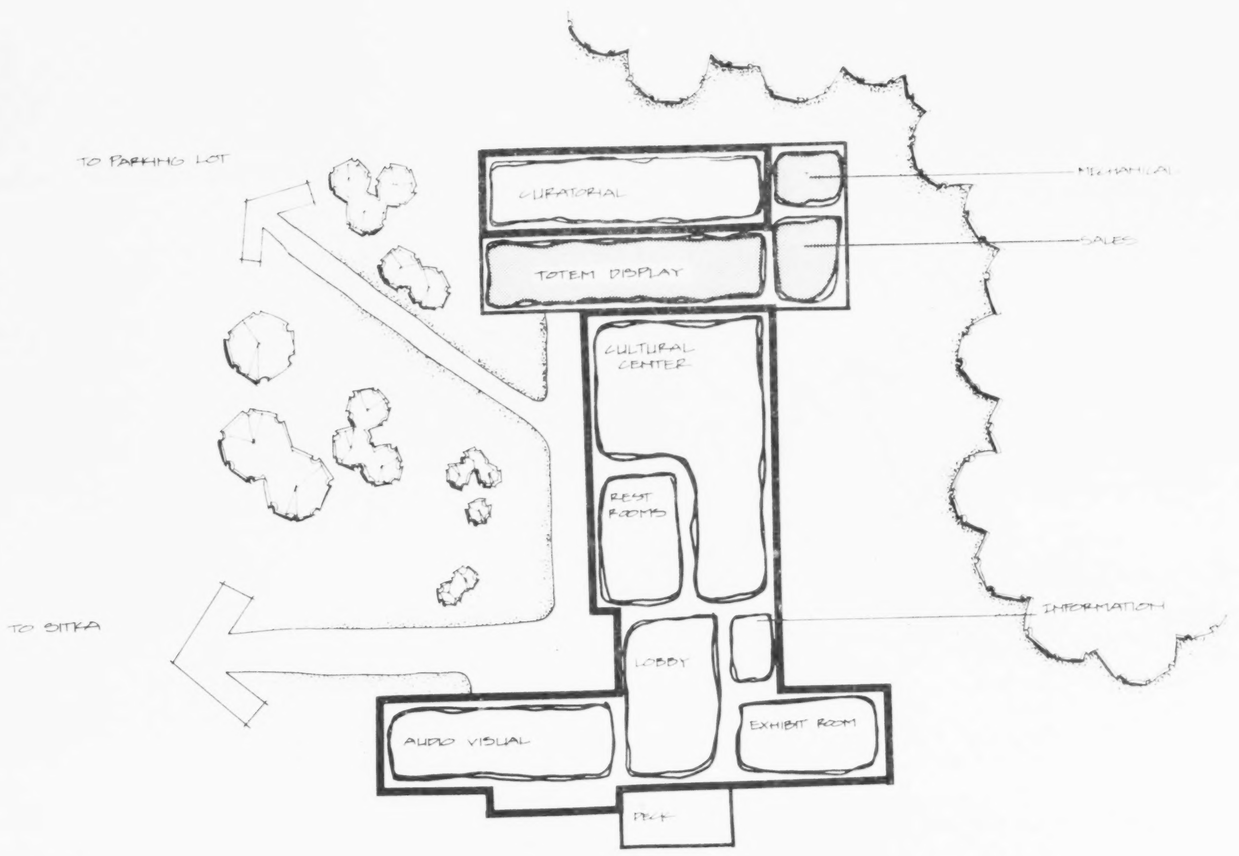
In this alternative both parking lots would be redesigned to improve vehicle and pedestrian circulation. The lower parking lot would be removed, and the area would be revegetated. The existing concrete pad next to the maintenance/curatorial facility would be removed and revegetated. A bus drop-off area would be provided, which would enable visitors direct and easy access to the visitor center. The upper parking lot would be redesigned to provide parking for automobiles and buses (refer to Site Plan B).

Total cost for this alternative would be $2,764,755 (not including rental costs). For a comparison of costs among tne alternatives refer to table 3.

ALTERNATIVE 4B

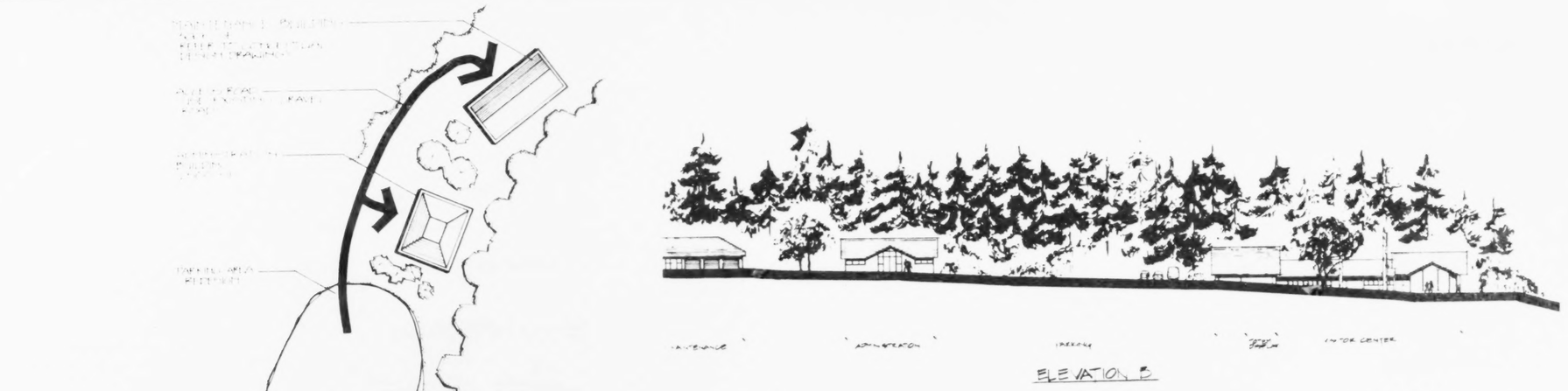
This alternative proposes construction of a new administration building (2,500 square feet) adjacent to the upper parking lot. Architecturally the new building would reflect the existing visitor center, with similar exterior finishes and roof lines.

As in alternative 1, the existing maintenance/ curatorial facility would be redesigned for curatorial services, the audiovisual area would be expanded, the cultural center area would be enlarged to provide office space for that activity, the restroom area would be enlarged and made handicap-accessible, and the

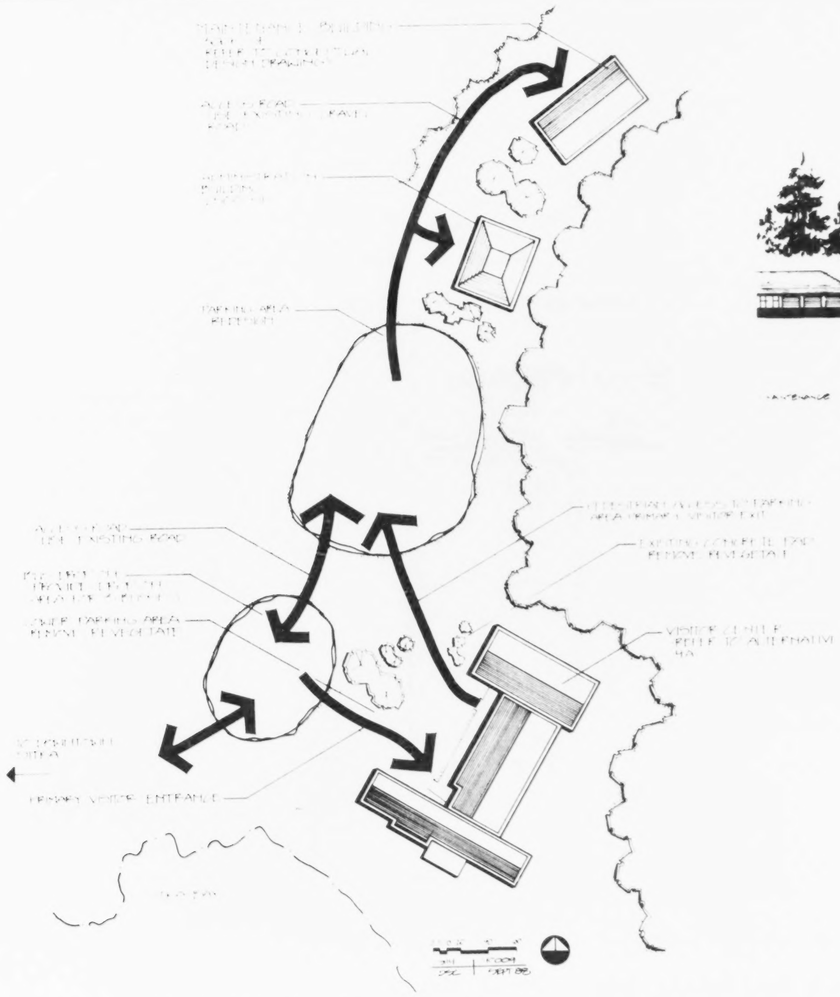


SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

ALTERNATIVES 4a and 4b ALASKA



ELEVATION B



SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

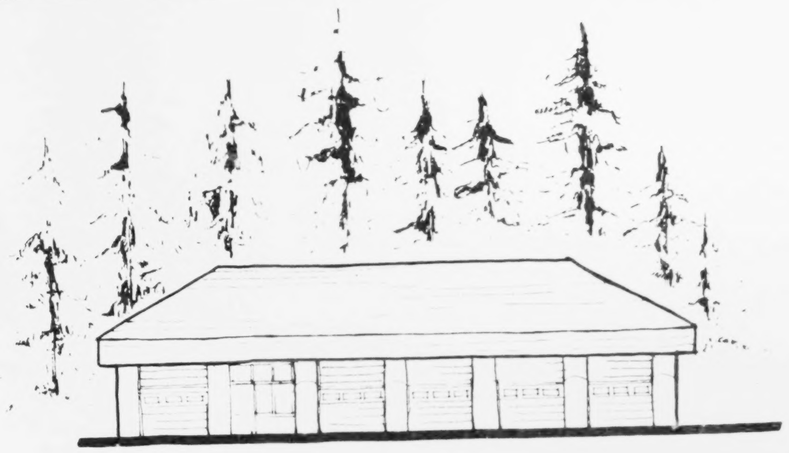
SITE PLAN B ALASKA

breezeway between the redesigned curatorial services building and the visitor center would house a new totem display area. Visitors would enter and exit as described in alternative 1. New mechanical (heating) and sales areas would be constructed east of the new curatorial services/totem display area (see Alternatives 4A and 4B map and see table 2 for specific square footages).

As in alternative 1, a new 3,000-square-foot maintenance building would be constructed on park land at the top of the BPR road. Access to this facility would be via the existing gravel road.

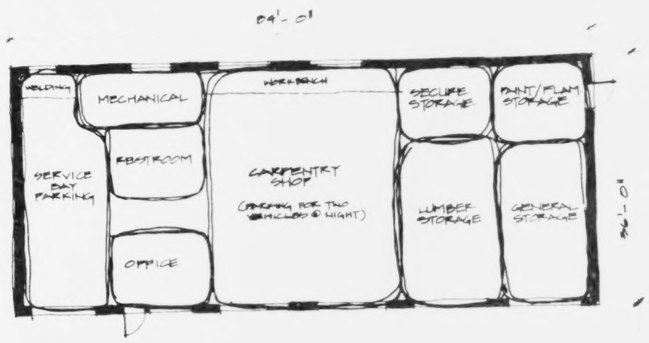
This alternative proposes redesigning both parking lots to improve circulation. The lower parking lot would be removed, and the area would be revegetated. The existing concrete pad next to the maintenance/curatorial facility would be removed and revegetated. A bus drop-off area would be provided, allowing visitors direct and easy access to the visitor center. The upper parking lot would be redesigned to provide parking for automobiles as well as buses (refer to Site Plan B).

The total construction costs for this alternative would be $3,506,947. For a comparison of costs among the alternatives refer to table 3.



EAST ELEVATION
NTS

SOUTH ELEVATION
NTS



FLOOR PLAN
NTS

SITKA NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN - MAINTENANCE FACILITY • ALASKA

Table 1. Summary of Alternatives

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4A	Alternative 4B
Administration	Located in new wing behind visitor center	Remains as is in locations throughout visitor center	Located in new two-story wing adjacent to redesigned curatorial facility	Located off site in rental space	Located in new building in visitor center area
Curatorial Services	Existing maintenance building converted to environmentally controlled curatorial services	Remains in substandard condition in existing maintenance building	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1
Maintenance	New building constructed north of visitor center	Remains in building adjacent to visitor center	Same as alternative 1	Located off-site in rental space	Same as alternative 1
Parking	Upper parking lot reorganized	Remains as is	Same as alternative 1	Lower parking lot removed and bus drop-off provided; upper parking lot redesigned	Same as alternative 4A
Audiovisual Area	Expanded into existing administrative location	Remains as is	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1
Restrooms	Expanded in current location	Remains as is	Existing remain; new restrooms provided on first floor of curatorial facility	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1
Sales	Relocated to new wing	Remains in current location	Expanded in current location	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1
Cultural Center	Expanded into existing sales area	Remains as is	Expanded into new totem wing	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1

PHASING

To implement any of the action alternatives, it would be necessary to phase construction to mitigate adverse effects on both the visitor experience as well as park operations. The following sequence of implementation is suggested:

1. Remove remaining maintenance staff and storage from the existing location to facilitate protection of the artifacts stored in the building. Maintenance could either be located off-site in a rental space or a new maintenance building could be constructed.

2. Retrofit the curatorial area to an environmentally controlled area adequate for artifact storage and curatorial activities.

3. Construct the totem display area to protect these resources.

4. Expand and relocate administrative functions.

5. Improve parking and circulation.

ALTERNATIVE COMPARISONS

Square Footages

The following table shows the allotted square footages in each alternative to allow for comparison.

Table 2. Comparison of Square Footage

Alternative	1	2	3	4A	4B
Lobby	1,232	1,232	1,232	1,232	1,232
Exhibit Room	960	960	960	960	960
Sales	640	320	640	480	480
Audiovisual	1,700	576	1,700	1,700	1,700
Cultural Center	2,400	2,016	2,110	2,400	2,400
Restrooms	1,150	528	1,150	1,150	1,150
Administration	2,500	1,296	2,500	2,500*	2,500
Mechanical	340	280	280	320	320
Information	280	100	280	280	280
Curatorial Services	2,330	1,232	2,330	2,330	2,330
Totem Display	1,440		1,440	1,440	1,440
Maintenance	3,000	1,095	3,000	3,000*	3,000

*Administration and maintenance would be off-site.

Cost Estimates

Table 3. Comparison of Costs

Alternative	1	3	4A	4B
New Construction				
Administration	$ 648,000	$ 648,000		$ 648,000
Maintenance	506,000	506,000		506,000
Remodel				
Visitor center	1,780,000	1,780,000	$1,780,000	1,780,000
Rental space			540,000	
Site Improvements				
Bus drop-off			6,000	6,000
Parking	23,000	23,000	23,000	23,000
Road	19,000	19,000		19,000
Shelter	7,000	7,000		
Walks			4,000	4,000
Shrubs	2,000	2,000	5,000	5,000
Gross Construction Costs	$2,985,000	$2,985,000	$2,358,000	$2,991,000
Advance and Project Planning Costs	514,912	514,912	406,755	515,947
Total Project Costs	$3,499,912	$3,499,912	$2,764,755*	$3,506,947

*Does not include rental costs. This would be an additional $3-4/square foot/year (i.e., a 3,000-square-foot maintenance building would lease for approximately $12,000 per year).

Life-Cycle Cost Estimates

To understand and evaluate the action alternatives, each was considered in terms of its full life-cycle funding implications. Estimates were calculated to compare the economic differences between new construction of both maintenance and administrative buildings to the cost of renting these facilities.

To calculate present-day value to the structures over a 20-year life span of the building, certain assumptions were made.

New Construction

Assumptions

1. All costs are calculated at present-day value.
2. Discount rate is 10 percent (OMB CIR A-94), except the percentage for energy, which is 7 percent.
3. Operations and maintenance costs, except energy, will be 1.0 percent of capital cost.
4. Energy cost will be 0.5 percent of capital cost.
5. Cyclic repair costs at years 5, 10, and 15 are at 10 percent of capital costs.

New maintenance building (3,000 square feet)

Construction cost	$429,300
O&M cost/year	$ 4,290
Energy cost/year	$ 2,145
Cyclic repair/5 years	$ 42,900
Present-value cost	$525,628

New administrative building (3,000 square feet)

Construction cost	$549,550
O&M cost/year	$ 5,495
Energy cost/year	$ 2,747
Cyclic repair/5 years	$ 54,955
Present-value cost	$671,360

Rental

Assumptions

1. All costs are calculated at present-day value.
2. Discount rate is 10 percent (OMB CIR A-94).
3. Energy is included in rent.
4. O&M is 0.25 percent of remodeling costs.
5. Lease costs increase 25 percent at years 5, 10, 15, and 20.

Rental maintenance building (3,000 square feet)

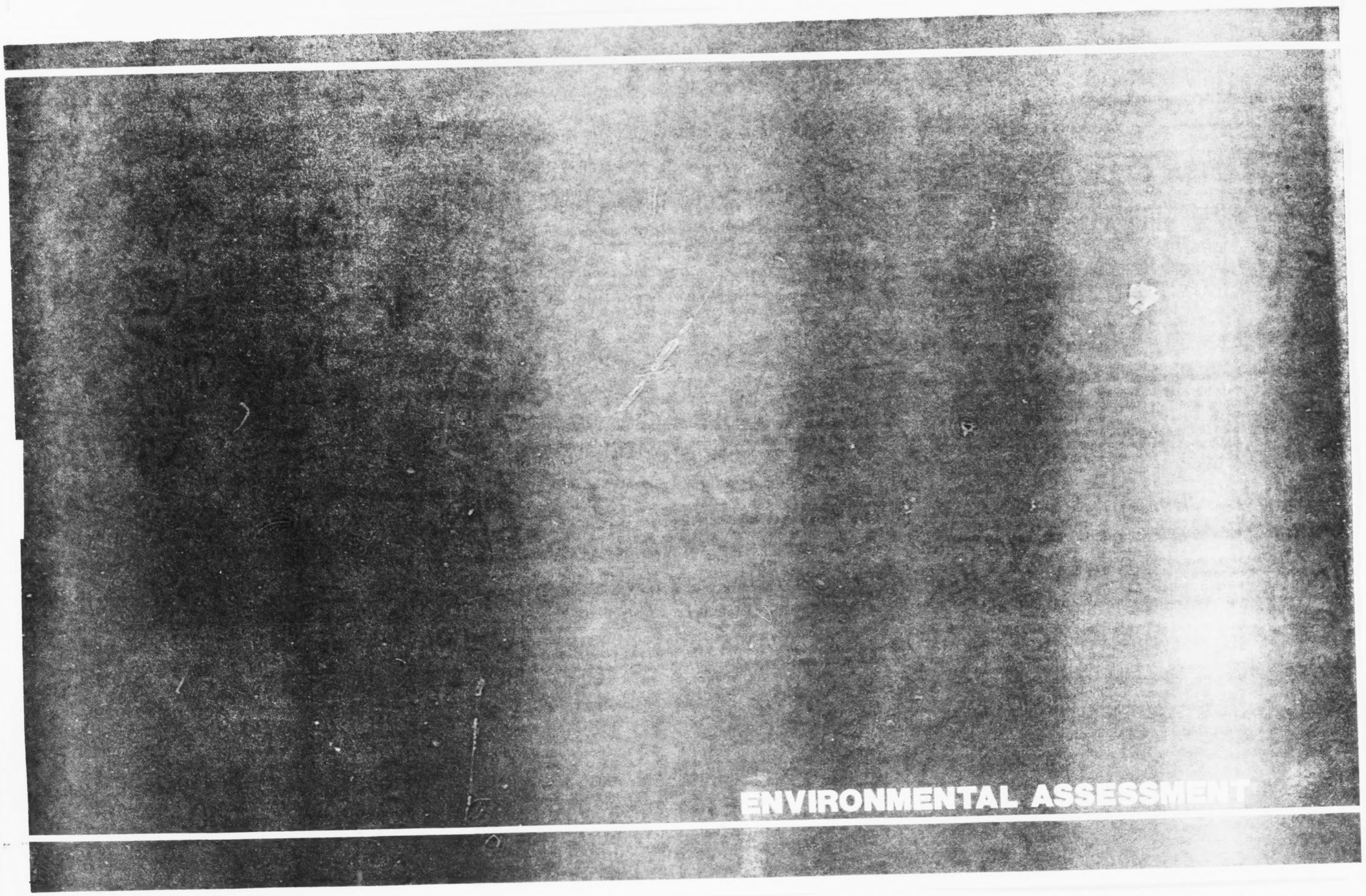
Remodeling cost	$257,600
Rent/year	$ 12,000
O&M costs/year	$ 644
Present-value cost	$392,600

Rental administration building (3,000 square feet)

Remodeling cost	$240,000
Rent/year	$ 12,000
O&M cost/year	$ 600
Present-value cost	$375,400

Summary of Life-Cycle Costs (Present-Day Value)

Maintenance building	
New	$525,600
Rental	$392,600
Administration building	
New	$671,300
Rental	$375,400


ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The marine climate at Sitka National Historical Park is characterized by relatively heavy precipitation and mild temperatures, with little difference in temperature change between seasons. Most of the 96.6 inches average annual precipitation in the park occurs as rain, although the mountainous Indian River watershed develops a considerable snowpack. The highest average monthly precipitation rate is in October, with 15.3 inches, while the average rate for June is only 3.5 inches.

Bald eagles, gulls, shorebirds, and ravens use the estuarine intertidal zone as a feeding area. Small mammals, such as squirrels, inhabit the forested areas of the park. Because of the development surrounding the park, larger wildlife seldom use the area.

Vegetation in the park is typical of southeast Alaska. Fir and Sitka spruce make up the overstory, with alder, dense ferns, and bushes making up the understory. The soft alluvial soil is covered with a thick mat of moss and lichens. The forest in the park is unique in that it has been protected from logging since the park was established in 1910. There are no species on any official state or federal threatened or endangered lists that reside or nest in or migrate through the area.

Soon after the founding of the Russian-American Company in 1799, the company established its southern outpost in Sitka. In 1802, however, driven by Russian usurpation of native hunting grounds and several acts of Russian brutality, an estimated several hundred Indians from various clans attacked the Russian outpost at Sitka. The Russians were driven out and their post was destroyed.

In the fall of 1804, the company returned to Sitka with an armada of four ships and 800 men. The Tlingits had prepared for their arrival by constructing a fort on the mouth of the Indian River. Built in the shape of a trapezoid, with its longest side towards the sea, it was constructed of wooden logs stacked on the ground, reaching a height of 6 feet. Two embrasures for cannons faced the sea, and two gates faced the forest. Within the fort were 14 large huts. After seven days of interspersed negotiations, bombardment from the Russian ships, and an unsuccessful attempt to storm the fort, the Tlingits abandoned the fort overnight. It was burned to the ground, and the Russian-American Company was able to reestablish its post at Sitka.

Although little remains of the actual fortifications, the potential for undisturbed underground archeological resources remains high. The fort site and the role the fort played in early Russian/native relations was the primary reason for the establishment of the national monument in 1910. Until World War II, members of the Kiksadi clan of Tlingits held commerative ceremonies at the site, in remembrance of their ancestors who died defending their native land against the Russians. Sitka National Historical Park, in its entirety, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Park Service provides space in the visitor center for the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center. The center is under contract to the Park Service to provide interpretation and programs about the Tlingit heritage, way of life, values, and philosophy, as well as demonstrate Tlingit arts, including silverwork, beadwork, and woodworking.

Approximately 98,885 people visited Sitka National Historical Park in 1987, and by August over 100,000 people had visited the park in 1988. In the past 10 years, visitation has fluctuated between a low of 72,000 in 1972 to a high of 121,000 in 1985. The majority of visitor use occurs during the summer season when the cruise ships come into Sitka Sound. Visitation generally is concentrated during the few hours the ships are in port. Locally, the park provides a scenic, peaceful area for walking and jogging. The serenity of the forest, its proximity to the city, and the loop trail system are very appealing to Sitka residents.

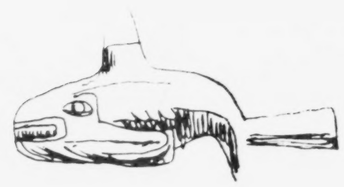


Table 4. Annual Visitation 1976–1988
Sitka National Historical Park

Year	Visits
1976	81,600
1977	87,200
1978	86,300
1979	72,100
1980	75,681
1981	90,521
1982	90,832
1983	88,261
1984	112,167
1985	121,067
1986	114,664
1987	98,885
1988	100,000+ (as of August 1988)

Most of the visitors come from the cruise ships, with the average visitor age being 67. There are some school groups in the spring and fall, but commercial tours account for most of the group visitors. Most local people visit the park two or three times a year.

IMPACTS

There would be several common impacts on natural and cultural resources, visitor use, and park staff as a result of the implementation of all action alternatives. These common impacts are discussed below, and other impacts associated with specific alternatives are addressed in table 5.

Impacts on Natural Resources

As a result of construction activities, some vegetative clearing and subsequent loss of Sitka spruce (Picea sitchensis) would occur. Specific acreages and numbers of trees are discussed under each alternative (see table 5).

Machinery emissions and increased airborne dust resulting from construction activities would decrease air quality in the vicinity of construction activities. Impacts on air quality would be temporary; normal conditions would return once construction was completed.

There would be no additional impact on the Indian River or its fish population as a result of any of the alternatives.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Sitka National Historical Park is on the National Register of Historic Places, and there is evidence of substantial archeological resources throughout the park. Where there is potential impact to any archeological site, investigation/testing is required. Such investigations would define the boundaries of subsurface cultural deposits and provide data necessary to assess the integrity and significance of those resources. Consultations with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office and further archeological excavation might be required to mitigate any impacts on significant cultural resources. It is not anticipated that any of the alternatives would have any adverse effects on cultural resources; however, in all cases an archeological clearance would be obtained before construction activities would begin.

Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in positive effects on the artifacts and totems in the park's care because of proper environmental storage and curation activities. Implementation would also accomplish several of the current management objectives--to obtain adequate facilities for storage, protection, and preservation of totem poles, and to preserve intact the physical remnants of the culture and history of the Tlingit and Russian residents of the area.

Impacts on Visitor Use and Park Operations

As a result of the implementation of any of the action alternatives, impacts on visitor use and park operations would be positive. Circulation throughout the visitor center would be improved. Additional audiovisual room and displays and the new totem display area would provide greater opportunity for interpretation. The removal of maintenance activities from the curatorial area would reduce conflicts between these two functions. Lastly, the new administration wing would improve park operations and provide adequate working conditions for park staff.

During construction activities, visitors and staff would be subject to noise, disruption of circulation patterns, and visual intrusions.

Table 5. Summary of Impacts

Resource Concerns	Alternative 1	Alternative 2 No-Action Alternative	Alternative 3	Alternative 4A	Alternative 4B
Impacts on Natural Resources					
Vegetation	Five trees removed for new visitor center wing; 10 trees removed for maintenance building; .2 acre understory disturbed	No impacts expected	13 trees removed for administrative wing; 10 trees removed for maintenance building; .2 acres of understory disturbed	No adverse impacts expected; positive impacts because of revegetation of the lower parking lot	.1 acre of understory disturbed for administrative building; 10 trees removed for maintenance building; .1 acre of understory disturbed; .05 acre of vegetation restored (because of removal and revegetation of lower parking lot)
Anadromous Fish	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected
Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animals and Plants	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected
Wildlife	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected
Floodplain/wetland	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected	No impacts expected
Impacts on Cultural Resources					
Archeological	No impacts expected; clearance would be obtained prior to construction	No impacts expected	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1
Artifact Storage	Artifacts would be stored and protected in a secure and environmentally controlled area.	The collections would continue to be stored in a nonenvironmentally controlled situation and be at risk.	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1

Table 5. Summary of Impacts

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2 No-Action Alternative	Alternative 3	Alternative 4A	Alternative 4B
Impacts on Visitor Use and Park Operations					
Visitor Use	Increased interpretive opportunities (i.e., audio-visual, totem display, visual access to curation activities); less congestion; additional restroom facilities would reduce lines and create more time to see exhibits; positive impacts resulting from the separation of maintenance activities and curatorial services functions.	Visitors would continue to be frustrated by congestion; interpretative opportunities would continue to be lost.	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1
Park Operations	New Administrative Wing: Concentrating administrative functions in one place would improve park operations; adequate space would exist for staff. New Maintenance Buildings: Adequate space for current maintenance activities; some outside storage for vehicles could cause damage to vehicles; maintenance activities separated from the visitor/curatorial area would eliminate present incompatible activities. Curatorial: Curators would have adequate work space.	Administration: There would continue to be less than adequate space for staffing needs; administrative functions in different wings would continue to create operating difficulties. Maintenance: Conflicts between maintenance staffs and curatorial activities would continue; inadequate storage and operating space would continue. Curatorial: Staff would continue in crowded conditions.	Same as alternative 1	Administration Off-Site: This would increase operational costs and create some operational difficulties due to distance and duplication of some services; there would be adequate space for staff. Maintenance Off-site: This could create some operational difficulties due to distance; there would be adequate space for maintenance functions. Curatorial: Same as alternative 1	Same as alternative 1

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Alaska Native Brotherhood
State Historic Preservation Officer, Anchorage, Alaska
U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service

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PREPARERS AND CONSULTANTS

Preparers

Denver Service Center

Nancy S. Arkin, Team Captain, Landscape Architect
Ed Nieto, Architect
Jo Wahbeh, Architect

Consultants

Park

Ernie Suazo, Superintendent
Gary Candelaria, Chief Ranger
Scott Taylor, Ranger

Alaska Regional Office

Linda Nebel, Chief, Division of Planning
Larry Beal, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Jean Swearingen, Regional Curator
Glenn Clark, Division of Interpretation

Washington Office

Jacob Hoogland, Chief, Environmental Compliance Division

Denver Service Center

Frank Williss, Historian

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by the editorial staff of the Denver Service Center. NPS D-20 October 1988